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U.S. EPA

ATTN: Harbor Comments

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I don't buy into 'clean the river, clean the business' mantra because they're cleaning up on business in Portland. I had to close my own business after ten years, which was a performing band that actually worked on some environmental projects, on December 31, 2015. It's already extremely hard to get performing gigs in Portland, but we also worked hard to follow stupid rules and regulations and paid high taxes, until it wasn't possible for us to stay open anymore. Businesses have enough trouble staying alive in Multnomah County, let alone paying for river and park cleanup. If the EPA wants the river clean, then they should be paying for it themselves, not taking from people and their businesses.

The government already has a history of wastefully spending money. For example, my band used to take in a lot of money from the government for helping environmental causes, which is more money they have spent on entertainment than anywhere else. I eventually quit going through the government because I felt sick about taking taxpayers' money for it. Our band often performed in festivals, schools, and parks along the riverfront for various environmental causes; at one time, we were the go-to band for the environmental movement. The construction will drive out businesses that already exist there, and instead we'll see much more profitable, tax-susceptible high-rises take their place. That seems to be the real agenda of what the EPA is doing. Even if they're cleaning the river, this is one method they can use to drive people out of that area. They figure if they can make it terribly inconvenient for people to go there, businesses will move. If this area turns into a construction zone, businesses that rely on the river will be hurt and jobs will be lost. I will be rabidly angry when my own taxes go up, and the local economy will be devastated as it will become impossible for people to make a living.

It's clear that the EPA doesn't care about what's good for the environment; they care whether their friends get good jobs and have enough money to buy nice things. I strongly urge you to take a second look at all the environmental projects and consider whether the cleanup is worth all this effort if businesses are going in the toilet. They have so much money they can grind you down. Instead, the money should be given back to the people they're taking it from in the first place. They know better about how to spend it in their own lives than the government does.

The EPA has already failed at a project like this before. They pulled a lot of pollution out of the Columbia River, and then they dumped it in the big hole at Ross Island. They purposely create more work and more problems so that they can justify their existence and spend more money. Of course, there are a lot of other ways they can clean the river up that is far less costly, expensive, and toxic.

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